

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF
CLAUSE 4(b) OF RULE XI WITH
RESPECT TO SAME DAY CONSIDERATION
OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS
REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON RULES

Mr. MCINNIS. MR. SPEAKER, BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON RULES, I CALL UP HOUSE RESOLUTION 445 AND ASK FOR ITS IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION.

The clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 445

Resolved, That the requirement of clause 4(b) of rule XI for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported from that committee on the legislative day of May 22, 1998, providing for consideration or disposition of the bill (H.R. 2400) to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes, an amendment thereto, a conference report thereon, or an amendment reported in disagreement from a conference thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EVERETT). The gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 445 is a simple resolution. The proposed rule merely waives the requirement of clause 4(b) of Rule XI for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House for resolutions reported from the committee on May 22, 1998, under certain circumstances.

This narrow, short-term, waiver only applies to special rules providing for the consideration or disposition of H.R. 2400, BESTEA, which will authorize funds for the Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, transit programs and for other purposes, amendments thereto, a conference report thereon, or an amendment reported in disagreement from a conference for H.R. 2400.

Mr. Speaker, House resolution 445 was reported by the Committee on Rules with voice vote. The Committee recognizes the need for an expedited procedure to bring this important bill forward as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, approval of the conference report to H.R. 2400 will provide desperately needed funds to help rebuild America's roads and bridges. This legislation provides the resources to meet America's infrastructure needs. Simply put, this bill is going to build America, reduce congestion, save lives. I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 445.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr.

MCINNIS), my good friend, for yielding me the customary half hour, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this rule waiving the two-thirds requirement for same day consideration of the transportation conference report is really a terrible way to legislate.

This conference report has only been available to Members for a very short period of time, and I would be willing to bet that most Members have not seen this legislation, and that very few, if any, have had a chance to read the whole conference report, unless they are actually a member of the conference committee.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a major piece of legislation which impacts every single Congressional District in this country, but few in the House have had an opportunity to look at the final product. We are spending billions upon billions of dollars, and we should know what we are voting on.

However, having said that, I will not oppose the rule because I realize that this conference report needs to be considered by the House before we leave for the Memorial Day break. We need to get highway construction monies back in the pipeline in time for the summer construction period.

I can only add that I hope the leadership will exercise more caution in the future when a bill of this magnitude comes before the House so that it will give Members sufficient time to read and fully comprehend the contents before voting on such comprehensive, far-reaching, expensive legislation.

Mr. Speaker, although this is not a good way to legislate, this transportation bill is far too important to let it fall by the wayside at this late hour, so I will reluctantly support this two-thirds rule.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER
AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT
ON H.R. 2400, BUILDING EFFICIENT
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION
AND EQUITY ACT OF 1998

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 449 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 449

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2400) to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes. All

points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for purpose of debate only.

House Resolution 449 is a straightforward resolution. The proposed rule merely waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration. This resolution was reported out of the Committee on Rules by a voice vote.

Mr. Speaker, the approval of House Resolution 449 will allow us to move forward with the consideration of the conference report to H.R. 2400, the new highway bill entitled the Transportation and Equity Act for the 21st Century.

Mr. Speaker, this is legislation that will provide desperately needed funds to help rebuild America's roads and bridges. This bill provides the resources to meet America's infrastructure needs.

Furthermore, the legislation improves safety on America's highways. For example, the conference report significantly strengthens drunk driving protections, including an increase in funding to help States enact and enforce programs to combat drunk driving. States can strengthen the .08 blood alcohol concentration legal limits, license revocation for repeat offenders, young offenders aged 21-34, and other targeted efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 449 and the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I once again thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) for yielding me the customary half-hour, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to at this time congratulate my colleagues, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BUD SHUSTER) and the ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. JIM OBERSTAR), for their very hard work on this bill.

Despite the months and months of clamoring, despite the vastly different transportation needs of the 50 States, the gentleman from Pennsylvania and the gentleman from Minnesota have managed to come up with a bill that satisfies the vast majority of Members and, for that, they deserve our thanks.

I am sure that most Members would change a thing or two in this bill if they could, but, all things being considered, it is about the best we are going to get, and I urge all my colleagues to support it.